

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

*A Manual of Marine Zoology for the British Isles.* By PHILIP HENRY GOSSE, A.L.S. Part I. London: Van Voorst. 1855. 12mo.

AMONGST the host of blind guides that are continually making their appearance, professing to clear up the mysteries of nature to the uninitiated, it is some satisfaction to us to have to record the publication of the present little work,—a work written with a definite and intelligible purpose, which is carefully and intelligently carried out. Mr. Gosse states, and we can readily believe him, that he has often, in the course of his investigations, felt the want of a manual which should give, in a succinct form, the characters of the genera of British animals, so as to enable the student to determine on the spot something more than the general alliances of any animal that might occur to him. As nobody else appeared inclined to undertake the task, he has set to work himself, and we have here a portion of the result of his labours, embracing the invertebrate animals as far as the Annulosa; the Mollusca and Vertebrata being reserved for a second part.

It is not only to the beginner that such a work as this is of value; the more advanced student of nature will find it of the greatest advantage, as, from its very small bulk, he can easily carry it in his pocket in his rambles along the shore, so as to ascertain at once the nature of the objects he meets with, and thus probably refresh his memory as to what has been, or remains to be, observed with respect to their habits and economy.

Upon these latter subjects the work of course contains little beyond generalities; the author has contented himself with working out the characters of the groups down to the genera, referring in every case to the larger works which have served him as guides in the different branches of his subject, and to which the student is referred for more extended information. To each genus is appended a list of the known British species, accompanied by an excellent outline figure on wood of one species. To the eye, on a cursory inspection, these figures constitute one of the most refreshing features of the book,—accustomed as we are to the continual recurrence of the same woodcuts in almost every popular work on natural history. The present part contains figures of three hundred and forty species, of which a great majority are original, and more than half of these drawn from living specimens.

In the execution of the work Mr. Gosse appears to have laboured carefully and conscientiously; the characters are given in clear and intelligible language, and we should think that the merest tyro would have no difficulty in working out most of the animals which he is likely to meet with on our shores. The Infusoria and Entozoa, however, are entirely omitted; the former from the uncertainty existing as to what are really Infusoria, and what embryonic forms of higher animal forms, and the latter because, to use Mr. Gosse's words,

“though some of them live in marine animals, their proper sphere is not the water or the land, but the living tissues of other creatures; they have a world of their own.” It must be admitted that these excuses are plausible, but we think by no means satisfactory; and the omissions in question only add to our regret, that instead of devoting his book exclusively to the marine zoology of these Islands, Mr. Gosse has not given us a manual of British animals, a work which (at least if the Insects were omitted) would have occupied but little more space.

In the classification adopted there is, of course, nothing new; but Mr. Gosse has put the ordinary views on this subject into a very simple and intelligible form. The most objectionable point in this respect, the separation of the Cirrhopods from the Crustacea as a distinct class, may perhaps conduce somewhat to this simplicity; but we cannot agree with Mr. Gosse in “believing that the diversity between the groups is quite as great as that which subsists between the Crustacea and the Arachnida, or between the Arachnida and the Insecta.”

For the explanation of the technical terms, Mr. Gosse has appended a glossary, which is certainly capable of great improvement. Thus, we are told that “Bilateral” means “having a right and a left side;” that “Capsules” are “bladder-like vessels;” that “Cirri” are “fleshy, unjointed threads;” that a “Sac” is “a-bag;” and there are several other instances of the same kind, some positively incorrect, others unsatisfactory, and a few trivial and unnecessary.

On the whole, however, it is rarely that we meet with a book containing so little to find fault with, and we look forward with pleasure to the appearance of the second part.

## PROCEEDINGS OF LEARNED SOCIETIES.

### ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

May 9, 1854.—Dr. Gray, Vice-President, in the Chair.

#### DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES OF HUMMING BIRD, FROM QUIJOS. BY JOHN GOULD, F.R.S. ETC.

Mr. Gould exhibited a Humming Bird, lately received from Quijos, which is very nearly allied to *Threnetes leucurus*, but which differs from that species in its larger size, and in having those parts of the tail-feathers of a deep fawn-coloured hue which are white in *T. leucurus*; precisely, in fact, the difference which occurs between *Lafresnaya flavicaudata* and *L. Gayi*. For this bird Mr. Gould proposed the name of

#### THRENETES CERVINICAUDA.

Head, all the upper surface, upper wing-coverts, two central tail-feathers, sides of the neck, breast and flanks shining olive-green; wings purplish-brown; lateral tail-feathers deep fawn-colour, stained